

Disparities in Physical Activity and Nutrition

Overweight/obesity among high school students: Non-Hispanic white high school students are more likely to not be overweight or obese than non-Hispanic African American and Hispanic students (77.4% versus 62.2% and 71.8% in 2009). In addition, younger high school students are generally more likely to not be overweight or obese (2009).⁴⁸

Physical activity levels among adults: Males are more likely than females to get the recommended amount of physical activity (51.1% versus 41.9% in 2009). Income and education are also related to physical activity levels. For example, individuals with the least income are the least likely to get the recommended level. The recommended level is achieved by 33.9% among individuals making \$15,000 or less and by 54% among those making \$75,000 or more (2009).⁴⁹

Fruit and vegetable consumption among adults: Increasing education and income are both positively associated with fruit and vegetable intake. College graduates are more than 1.5 times as likely to eat five fruits and vegetables a day as those with a high school diploma or GED (2009). Similarly, individuals earning more than \$75,000 are more than 1.5 times as likely to eat five or more fruits and vegetables a day than those earning less than \$15,000 (2009).⁵⁰

Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Obesity by Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Level of the Socioecological Model	Strategies
Individual	Eat more fruits and vegetables; increase physical activity level. ⁵¹
Family/Home	Serve fruits and vegetables with meals ⁵¹ ; reduce screen time at home. ⁵²
Clinical	Offer obesity screening for children aged more than 6 years and for adults, and offer counseling and behavioral interventions for those identified as obese ³⁴ ; expand childhood obesity prevention initiatives for children ⁵¹ ; stay up-to-date on evidence-based clinical preventive screening, counseling, and treatment guidelines.
Schools and Child Care	Offer high-quality physical education and healthy foods and beverages ^{17,51,53} ; implement evidence-based healthful living curricula in schools ^{17,31} ; expand physical activity and healthy eating in after-school and child care programs ^{17,53} ; support joint use of recreational facilities. ¹⁷
Worksites	Institute worksite wellness programs and promote healthy foods and physical activity ⁵⁴ ; assess health risks and offer feedback and intervention support to employees. ⁵⁵
Insurers	Offer coverage at no cost sharing for obesity screening for children aged more than 6 years and adults and for counseling and behavioral interventions for those identified as obese. ^{34,u}
Community	Implement <i>Eat Smart, Move More</i> community-wide obesity prevention strategies ¹⁷ ; promote menu labeling in restaurants ⁵³ ; build active living communities ⁵¹ ; support joint use of recreational facilities ¹⁷ ; support school-based and school-linked health services. ³¹
Public Policies	Require schools to offer high-quality physical education and healthy foods and beverages ^{17,51,53} ; require schools to implement evidence-based healthful living curricula in schools ^{17,31} ; fund <i>Eat Smart, Move More</i> community-wide obesity prevention plans ¹⁷ ; provide community grants to promote physical activity and healthy eating ^{17,51} ; support community efforts to build active living communities ⁵¹ ; provide tax incentives to encourage comprehensive worksite wellness programs ¹⁷ ; and provide funding to support school-based and school-linked health services and achieve a statewide ratio of 1 school nurse for every 750 middle and high school students. ³¹

u Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub L No. 111-148, § 10001, 4105-4106, enacting §2713 of the Public Health Service Act, 42 USC §300gg.